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House of Representatives
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Rep. Green comments on House passage of campaign finance reform measure

WASHINGTON – U.S. Rep. Mark Green, R-Green Bay, issued the following statement early Thursday after the U.S. House of Representatives took its final vote on the Shays-Meehan campaign finance reform proposal. The proposal passed the House by a vote of 240-189. Rep. Green voted against final passage, instead supporting a plan to ban all soft money contributions.

“Folks across Wisconsin and America have made themselves crystal clear: they want to get rid of soft money in campaigns and they want to get rid of it now. Unfortunately, this bill does neither.”

“Despite our best efforts to fix it, the Shays-Meehan campaign finance reform proposal that passed the House still contains a glaring soft money loophole. While it bans soft money to national parties, it still allows millions in these unregulated contributions to go to state and local parties. It doesn’t actually attack the soft money problem, it simply shifts it from the national level to the state and local level.”

“I spent a good part of the day trying to close that loophole, and fought on the floor for an amendment to ban all soft money on every level– no ifs, ands or buts. Unfortunately, we lost that fight, so this bill still does not ban soft money; anyone who claims it does just isn’t being straight with the voters.”

“I’m also very discouraged that the authors of the bill decided at the last moment to delay the effective date of this measure. The proposal won’t take effect until after the next election cycle.”

“We tried to change that, too, making these reforms effective as soon as they’re signed into law. Again, we were beaten by the so-called advocates of reform.”

“My position today is simple: we should ban all soft money and ban it now. The end result of today’s action, however, is this: only some soft money will be banned, and not until nearly a year from now – after the next elections.”

“And they call this ‘real reform?’”